

A

Thanksgiving Sermon FOR THE D E F E A T Of the Late Horrid and Unnatural Rebellion.

Preach'd to a Congregation of
PROTESTANT DISSENTERS,

June the 7th, 1716.

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Minister of the Gospel.

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Psal. xxi. 11.

For they intended Evil against thee, they imagined a mischievous Device which they are not able to perform.

WE are met together at this time, to render our most humble Thanks to Almighty God, for His great Goodness and Mercy, in suppressing the late most wicked and unnatural Rebellion. Never had we greater cause of Joy and Gratitude, than on this Day; to the happy Occasion of which, we owe all that is Dear and Valuable to us, as Protestants, and as a Free People. And, as I am perswaded we do all most sincerely rejoice in the Disappointment and Overthrow of so detestable a Conspiracy, against our King and Country; I would, from the Words which I have read, endeavour to improve and increase it.

Some Passages in this Psalm have a very manifest reference to the Messiah, and are accordingly apply'd to him, not only by Christian Writers, but by the Jews themselves. But it seems to have been more immediately designed for a solemn Thanksgiving to God, for the receipt of those Mercies that had been prayed for in the foregoing Psalm; for David's Victories over his Enemies, which were a Type of the Victory of our Blessed Saviour over all the Powers of Darkness *. Tho' David was anointed King by the Special Designation and Appointmēt of God Himself,

* Bishop Patrick.

and was established in the Throne, by the universal Voice of the People ; yet his Reign was not only disturbed by necessary Wars with Foreign Enemies, but by intestine Commotions rais'd by rebellious Subjects : But as the Designs of these People were very wicked, were against God, and against their Lawful Prince ; so all their Attempts were unsuccessful, they were always defeated and overthrown. *They intended Evil, they imagined a mischievous Device, but they were not able to perform it.*

And these Words, without entring into a more particular Explication of them, would lead us to observe these Two things.

First, That the best of Princes will not be without Enemies, and in the best Reigns, evil Men will be ready to enter into most wicked and mischievous Designs and Conspiracies against their Sovereign. Some will find Pretences of Dissatisfaction, where there is the most undoubted Title, the wisest Administration, and every recommending and desirable Quality in the Person of the Prince : And their Discontent and Ambition will put them upon the vilest and most barbarous Attempts. History will afford us Instances of this in all Ages : And we learn from the Sacred Records, that if the Blessed God Himself, should in the most particular manner appoint our Governors, it would not prevent it. *David*, as I have hinted, was appointed to succeed *Saul*, and anointed King, by the special Command of God ; yet how long, notwithstanding, did all the Tribes of *Israel*, except only that of *Judah*, refuse to receive him, and set up a pretended Hereditary Right, in Opposition to his juster Title and truly Divine Right ? And how did they afterwards join in Rebellion against him, first with *Absalom*, and then with *Sheba* the Son of *Bichri* ? *Moses*, the Man of God, who was King in *Jessurun* *, and appointed to conduct the People of *Israel* out of the House of Bondage, to the promised Land of *Canaan*, had un-

* *Deut.* xxxiii: 5.

doubted

doubted Evidence of his Authority given from Heaven; yet all could not secure the Peace of his Administration, nor prevent the wicked Conspiracy and Rebellion of *Korah* and his Accomplices: And thus it will ever be: Ill Men will be always prepared for such Wickedness and Mischief, tho' it may not break out for want of a proper Opportunity, and of sufficient Force and Numbers to support it, and give it a prospect of Success. But,

Secondly, Tho' such will be the Disposition of some Men under the best Government, and the wisest and most upright Administration; yet we may also observe that they have been for the most part unsuccessful in their wicked Designs, and *have not been able to perform the Evil and Mischief they had intended.* They have indeed sometimes succeeded; but they have much oftener fail'd, and have met with deserved Disappointment, Shame, and Ruin. Good Princes are under the peculiar Protection of God; and He sees into all the Treason and Villany of those that conspire against them; *He understandeth their Thoughts afar off **; He makes his Glory shine forth, by a timely discovering their impious Contrivances, by insatnating their wicked Counsels, by unravelling and oversetting their well-concerted Schemes, and by defeating all their execrable Attempts. We have had abundant Evidence of this in our own Nation: The many Conspiracies against Q. Elizabeth, the Powder-Treason, the Assassination-Plot against the late Glorious K. William, as well as the Deliverance of this Day, are very remarkable Instances of it.

I might enlarge on these Observations, but I will rather make Application of the Words of the Text more directly to our present Busines, and so I shall take Occasion from them,

I. To shew the great Wickednes of the late Rebellion.

II. To consider the Remarkable Providence of God, in the happy Suppression of it. And as the Consideration of these Two, will shew us how great cause we have of Thankfulness to God, I will in the

III. And last place, endeavour to urge it upon you, in a serious Exhortation thereunto.

I. I will endeavour to shew the great Wickedness of the late Rebellion. We are strictly commanded to be subject to the higher Powers *, and to submit to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake ||. And as a reason of our Submission, we are assured, that altho' this or the other particular Form of Government is the Ordinance of Man, yet Government in general is of Divine Institution, and the Ordinance of God. While Governors answer the End of their Institution, which is to promote the Peace and Happiness of their Subjects, they are the Ministers of God, and his Vicegerents upon Earth: They act by his Authority, and are not to be resisted upon any pretence whatsoever. If a Prince indeed, shall not only neglect the Duty of his Office, but instead of attending to the Interest, and seeking the Good of his Subjects, shall endeavour their Ruin, and be guilty all manner of Violence and Oppression; If he becomes a Terror to Good Works, and an Encouragement to Evil **; If having made an express Contract with his People, and taken solemn Oaths to maintain their Rights and Liberties, he shall afterwards break thro' all those Ties, and endeavour to subvert the Constitution which he has sworn to preserve, as was the Case at the Revolution; Then Resistance becomes necessary, and it is not to rebel against our Lawful Prince, but to oppose a Tyrant; not to act against the Minister of God, who can never be so much the Author of Sin, as to give a Commission for Perjury and Oppression, but an Usurper of Power he

* Rom. xiii. 1. || i Pet. ii. 13.

** Bishop Hoadley's Measures of Submission.

has no Claim to, and an Invader of the Rights of Mankind. But on the other hand, to resist a good Prince in the execution of his Office, and while is seeking and aiming at the Publick Happiness, is to rebel against the Ordinance of God, and they that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation *. All Rebellion has a great deal of Iniquity in it, is exceedingly displeasing to God, and of a very mischievous Effect and Consequences ; but certainly the late Rebellion in this Kingdom was a Wickedness, to which we can hardly find a Parallel. This will appear, if we consider,

First, The very Evil and Mischievous Intention and Design of it.

Secondly, Several very black and aggravating Circumstances which attended it.

First, The Intention and Design of the late Rebellion was very Evil and Mischievous, *They intended Evil, they imagined a mischievous Device.* Wicked and Mischievous indeed. For,

1. It was a Design to Depose and Murder our most Gracious Sovereign King George, and to substitute in his room a Pretender to his Crown and Dignity ; to deprive us of our Rightful Prince, and give us in his stead a vile Impostor ; to dethrone a Prince, who alone has a just Claim to our Allegiance, who is our King by the Laws of our Country, and the univerſal Voice of Those who wish well to it ; and who is on all accounts most worthy of the Crown he wears ; a Prince of the greatest Capacity and Courage, of eminent Virtue and Goodness, and possessed of every Quality that may endear him to all his good Subjects ; and to set upon his Throne, one of a disputed and justly suspected Birth, incapable to govern us by the Constitution and Laws of our Country, of a wretched poorness and meanness of Spirit, and bred up in an incurable Aversion to us and our Religion : For such a Creature, our Rebels would have murdered the best of Kings. How far any of them had entred into a particular Scheme

and Engagement for that purpose, into an Assassination-Plot, like that against our late Glorious Deliverer, carry'd on by Men of the same ill Principles, is what we are not yet able to determine: However, as their Design certainly was to Depose his Majesty, it must, in consequence have been to Murder him. For, as it has been observed by a very Great Person *, They could not have expected that any of that Valiant Family would have thought of saving themselves by Flight, or have easily yielded up their Right to the Imperial Crown of these Realms. *While they took Counsel together against him, they devised to take away his Life* ||; and not his only, but of his Royal Offspring, to be sure of our Excellent Prince, the Heir both to the Virtues and Dominions of his Royal Father.

2. To subvert the Protestant Religion, and introduce and establish Popery, was also intended by the late Rebellion; and so we may say of it, what the Psalmist does in the Text, of his Enemies, *They intended Evil against thee, O Lord, to extirpate and destroy thy true Religion.* The Ruin of that Religion which is founded on the Word of God, and built upon the Foundation of the *Apostles and Prophets* **; and which has been preserved to us by a most wonderful Series of Divine Appearances, must have been the Consequence, if our Enemies had succeeded. And we must have had in the room of it, a False and Idolatrous, a Blind and Bloody Religion; a Religion which under the pain of Damnation, requires us to believe the greatest Absurdities and most monstrous Contradictions, and to practise the grossest Superstitions, and most abominable Idolatries; which sanctifies the greatest Villainies, and makes Murder and Treason meritorious; which takes away the Key of Knowledge, and puts out our Eyes; demands that we absolutely give ourselves up to its Conduct, and implicitly and blindly follow all that it shall dictate; a Religion which instead of promoting Holiness, the great Design of Chri-

* *Lord High Steward.* || *Ps. xxxi. 13.* ** *Eph. ii. 20.*
Christianity,

stianity, gives a full Licence to Sin, which the Soul o
God abhors, by its vain Distinctions, its trifling Pe-
nances, and its scandalous Indulgencies : In a word, a
Religion which has made itself drunk with the Blood
of many Thousands of the Saints, which transforms
its Votaries into the most savage Creatures, and which
persecutes all that differ from it, with unrelenting
Cruelty, with the most inhumane and unparalleled
Barbarity, as all *Europe*, and ourselves in particular,
have sadly experienced.

And what must we then think of those, who would
have entailed all this upon us? For thus it must have
been, if they had been able to have fixed the Pretender
on the Throne ; and they are under a miserable Delu-
sion, who can imagine it would have been otherwise.
His Religion would have obliged him to all this, and
his own Bigotry would have driven him on ; he must
have done it from Principle, the Directors of his Con-
science would not have suffer'd him to neglect it ; in
their Opinion, to establish the Roman Faith and Wor-
ship, and extirpate Heresy by all the Methods of Blood
and Violence, would have been meritorious in the
highest degree : No Promises, or Oaths, could have
been our Security, because they could have been no
Tie upon his Conscience, it having been decreed in a
General Council of that Religion, *That no Faith is to
be kept with Heretics.* Nor would all the Zeal which
any Protestants could have shewn, or the Services they
could have done for his Cause, have been regarded a
Day longer, than his Interest would have made it ne-
cessary. How cruelly were the Protestants in *France*
persecuted by *Lewis XIV.* tho' they had preserved the
Crown upon his Head, and supported his Interest a-
gainst a powerful Competitor? How were they re-
warded by that ungrateful and barbarous Monarch,
for their unshaken Fidelity, and all the important Ser-
vices they had done him? And would it not there-
fore have been the greatest Folly to have expected any
better Treatment from One that was his Pupil, and
that has had his Education under his Influence and Di-
rection?

restion? And here at Home, both Q. Mary and the late K. James, were under the strongest Engagements to Protestants, and had solemnly promised to make no Alteration in Religion; and yet the Former filled the Land with Protestant Blood, and the Latter would have done the same, if the ancient Virtue of the English Nation had not exerted itself, and he had not been forced thereby to abdicate the Government. And we are infatuated if we can think it will not be always thus under a Popish Prince. And if the Rebels had prevailed, and had been able to place the Pretender on the Throne of these Kingdoms, it would have brought such a long Train of Popish Successors upon us, that without the greatest Miracle, our Religion had been irrecoverably lost; for what had been too much for one Life to do, for compleating its Ruin, would certainly have been accomplish'd by some of the rest.

3. The late Rebellion was raised with Design to overthrow and destroy our Liberty, as well as our Religion; and had it succeeded, we had been no longer a Free People. We have the Happiness of a most Excellent Constitution, of being under no Laws, but what have been made by ourselves; and the Liberties we enjoy do justly render us the Glory of the World: We cannot be too tenacious of them, or do too much to preserve them. They have cost us the Blood of many Thousands, and an infinite Mass of Treasure to secure them; and they have been well worth it All: Our Ancestors have taken care to transmit them down to us; and it is highly incumbent on us, to leave the precious Depositum safe in the Hands of our Posterity. Nor could any thing, next to the loss of our Religion, fill with greater Indignation, than Attempts to deprive of our Liberties: But they would have been gone, our Rebels had carry'd the Day. Popery would have introduc'd with it Arbitrary Power, and indeed could not have been establish'd in these Kingdoms without it. Laws, which secure the Protestant Religion, could have been dispensed with, especially by the Pretender, who has not only been bred in all the Superstition

stition and Idolatry of the *Roman Church*, but in the most Arbitrary Government, and under the Tuition of a most Absolute and Tyrannical Prince. And we must have changed our present happy Settlement, for all the Miseries of a *French Government*. The Chains of the vilest Slavery had been fasten'd down upon us. What must they have deserved who would have brought us into such lamentable Circumstances? How can we think of so wicked a Design, without the utmost Abhorrence? Are they worthy of the Name of *Britons*, that can entertain any favourable Thought of it? To have lost all that we have been contending so many Years for, in the Defence of which so many brave Men have fallen, and which it hath cost us so much to preserve! O what cause have we to be thankful, that their Hands were not able to perform so vile a Purpose, who would have brought on us all this Evil and Mischief? And that God has enabled us to stand fast in that *Liberty* wherewith He hath made us free *. To this we may add,

4. The Success of the late Rebellion would have gone near to have ruined the Protestant Interest every where, and destroyed *Liberty* throughout *Europe*. The Accession of *Great-Britain* and *Ireland* to the side of Popery, would in all probability have brought all other Protestant Countries under the same intollerable Yoke, and *France* would have obtained its so long aimed-at Universal Empire. But I will proceed,

2dly, To mention several very black and aggravating Circumstances which attended the late Rebellion. Its superlative Wickedness does not only appear from the evil and mischievous Design of it; but there were such Circumstances in it, that do exceedingly add to its guilt. It had this in common with other Rebellions, that it brought on us the Miseries of an Intestine War, involv'd us in Blood, and cost the Lives of many Gallant Men: But, Blessed be God, much of this was prevented by its so speedy Suppression; so that we were happily delivered from those direful Effects, which

would have followed a longer Continuance of it. And, besides what it had in common with other Rebellions, it is exceedingly aggravated by the following Particulars.

1. It was altogether without Cause : Not the least just Occasion had been given for it. His Majesty had done nothing, for which any good Subject could be his Enemy. No one thing can be named, that he ever did, that was not perfectly consistent with the Laws and Constitution of our Country ; nor has he ever made the least Attempt, or shewn the least Inclination towards any such thing. What has his Reign hitherto been, but one continued Endeavour to promote our common Good, to raise the Credit and Reputation, and advance the true Interest of his Kingdoms ? What Security has he not given us, for the Preservation of our Religion, Laws and Liberties ? Have we not these confirmed to us by his Coronation-Oath, which his Religion will not, like that of *Rome*, allow him to break ? And how truly may he say, as the Prophet did, who had for many Years administered impartial Justice to a very ungrateful People, like our selves ? *Behold here I am, witness against me before the Lord ; whose Ox have I taken ? or whose Ass have I taken ? or whom have I defrauded ? whom have I oppressed ? or of whose Hand have I received any Bribe, to blind mine Eyes therewith ** ? Upon his Accession to the Throne, his Majesty, indeed, thought fit to remove those from his Person and Councils, who in the late Reign had by their fatal Measures brought us to the very Brink of Ruin ; and to replace in their room, the Old Faithful Ministers, who had done the greatest Service to their Country : But this was doing no more than they that were loudest in the Complaint, had very warmly contended for, as a Prince's Right to do, even without Cause, and at his Pleasure. This will lead me to observe,

2. That many of those who engaged in the late Rebellion, acted in Defiance to their avowed Principles, the Principles which they had gloried in, and upon

* *I Sam. xii. 3.*

which

which they had most valued themselves. They had distinguish'd themselves by the warmest Zeal for the Doctrine of Non-Resistance, for an unlimitted Submission under illegal and most cruel Oppressions. They had declared it absolutely unlawful to take up Arms upon any Pretence whatsoever against the Sovereign; not for the Maintenance of the Lives and Liberties, either of our selves, or others, nor for the Defence of Religion, nor for Preservation of the Church or State, no, nor yet, if that could be imagined possible, for the Salvation of a Soul, no, nor for the Redemption of the whole World, * and yet these very Men take up Arms, and break out into a Rebellion against their Lawful Prince, without any reasonable Provocation, so that we have seen what at first View appears a Contradiction, Non-Resisting Rebels, and those who could use no other Weapons but Prayers and Tears, Levyng War with Fire and Sword against their King and Country. It must be confessed indeed, that all this was in some Measure to be accounted for, on the Supposition of their being perswaded, that all their Allegiance was only due to the Pretender, and that he only had a just Claim to their Obedience. But then,

3. They are justly charged with the vilest Hypocrisy; for had not the same Men pretended a mighty Zeal for the late Queen? Had they not own'd her Authority, and acted under her Administration? Had they not acknowleg'd his present Majesty King George, and some of them at least actually set their Hands to the proclaiming him Rightful King of these Realms? Did not the late Rebel General || particularly upon his Majestys Accession to the Throne, write a Letter full of Professions of Duty and Loyalty? And how could they act in this Manner, without the most abominable Prevarication, if all the while they were convinc'd of a Right in the Pretender? How wretch-

* Bishop Sanderson.

|| Late Earl of Mar.

ed

ed was their Dissimulation ! How astonishing such a Conduct ! But this is not all.

4. It further adds to their Crime, that they were guilty of the blackest Perjury. The Papists indeed, and the Nonjurors, acted in a much fairer Manner, in refusing to take an Oath of Fidelity to a Prince they could not acknowledge, and to abjure a Person in whom they believ'd the Right to be : But no Words can Express the horrible Impiety of those Men, who acted in the late Rebellion, after they had bound themselves by a Solemn Oath of Allegiance to his Majesty King George ? and had called the Great God to Witness, that they believed in their Consciences, that the Person for whom they took up Arms had no manner of Right to the Imperial Crown of these Realms, had abjured him in the strongest Terms, and had disclaim'd, and that upon Oath too, all Equivocation and Mental Reservation ? How amazing is it, especially, that this should be done by any who bore the Character of Ministers of a Protestant Church. We had good Reason to conclude, that God would not let such Iniquity succeed, or the Workers of it escape ; but that He would, in His Righteous Anger, cast down so vile a People. †

II. I will now proceed to consider, the Remarkable Providence of God in the Happy Suppression of this wicked Rebellion. Tho' our Enemies had intended so much Evil against God, and against their King and their Country, blessed be God, they were not able to perform it : They could not succeed, but have met with deserved Shame, Disappointment and Ruin. *The Lord hath disappointed the Devices of the Crafty, so that their Hands could not perform their Enterprize. He hath taken the Wise in their own Craftiness, and the Counsel of the Froward is carried Headlong.* || And His Good Providence has herein been very Remarkable ; as will appear by the following Particulars.

+ Psal. 6. 7.

|| Jer. 5. 12, 13.

I. The Measures of the Rebels seen'd to have been strongly concerted : They apprehended, at least, that the Measures they had entred into could not probably fail of Success. During the late Administration, they had fecur'd themselves of Foreign Affiance, by making such a Peace after a most succesful War, as put it into the Power of that Prince and Kingdom that had harboured and nursed the Pretender, to pour in upon us a numerous Army of Bloody Papists to support his Claim. And at home, Men were permitted with Impunity to be listed for the same Service ; and we were suffered to lie in a very naked and defenceless Condition. Our Seamen were sent into the Service of *France*, and our Land-Forces for the same purpose disbanded abroad, without Money enough to bring them home. And our Ships, *the Walls of our Country*, were offered to the Court of Spain at a moderate Price *. All Apprehensions of our Danger from the Pretender and the Papists were expos'd and ridicul'd to the last, as well as utterly disown'd by the Men who enter'd into the black Conspiracy to bring him in. A loud Glamour was indeed made, after his Majesty's happy Accession, of the *Danger of the Church* ; but not from its real Enemies, the Papists, but from Protestant Dissenters, who had neither the Power, nor Will to hurt it. Papists with all their Idolatry and Superstition, with all their barbarous and inhumane Usage of Hereticks, were made a very harmless People ; but Protestant Dissenters, tho' of the same Faith, and agreeing with the Establish'd Church in all the Essentials of Worship, were Persons not to be tolerated : All the Church's Danger was represented to be from them. And thus a different Turn was given to the Dispositions and Affections of the People, who from their Infancy had been brought up in an Abhorrence of Popery. By this Method their old Aversion to it was wearing off apace, and they were but too much prepared to give it a welcome Reception. All the Scandal that Malice could invent, was cast on his Majesty and

* Occasional Paper, No. VI.

his Royal Family ; all the mean and low Calumny, which could tend to daub and alienate the Minds of the Common People. And on the other hand, the Pretender was painted out as a Person of excellent Qualitys, and his Title to the Crown impudently and openly asserted. And when the Conspirators apprehended that by these and other the like wicked Methods they had sufficiently prepared the way for a general Insurrection, then they broke out into an open Rebellion. They took Counsel together against the Lord, and against his Anointed, saying, Let us break their Bands asunder, and cast away their Cords from us. But he that sitteth in the Heavens, laughed at all their wretched Policy ; the Lord has had them in Derision ; He has spoken to them in his Wrath, and vexed them in his sore Displeasure ||. For,

2. His good Providence very signally appear'd in a timely and seasonable Discovery of the Conspiracy, by which the Rebellion's spreading it self so far as it otherwise would have done, was happily prevented. The Government had by that means the Opportunity of securing several who might have acted in the Mischief, and contributed no small Part to it ; of putting it self into a better Posture of Defence, and of disappointing our Enemies in their first and more immediate Design ; which did not a little to break and defeat the whole. They had the Mortification to see their Evil Intentions detected, before they were able to put them in Execution. And then,

3. The Finger of God was most remarkably evident, in removing in the most seasonable Juncture, the Person on whose Assistance the Rebels principally depended. His Majestys Accession to the Throne was a surprizing Mercy ; but this was a fatal Disappointment to the Hopes of our Enemies : For it is past all Doubt, they chiefly rely'd on that Monarch, whom they had endeavour'd by their Management to make as great and powerful as they could : And for him to be taken away just as their Deligns were ripe for Execution

cution, was a confounding Stroke. Had his Death happen'd sooner, they would in all probability have then reserv'd themselves for a more favourable Opportunity; and had his Life been prolonged a few Months more, we should have had a much more formidable Power to contend with, our Danger had been much greater. We had had an Army of Papists, of French and Irish Papists, in our Bowels. And at best, our Land had been a Field of Blood, and a Heap of Ruin and Desolation. *O Blessed be the Lord who hath not given us a Prey to their Teeth.* This is the Lord's Doings and it is marvellous in our Eyes.* ||

4. No less remarkable was the Providence of God in the Success of his Majesty's Forces against the Rebels. *The Greatness, and the Power, and the Glory, and the Victory are his, † and he gives them to whom he pleases;* and the manner of his bestowing them upon us was very wonderful. One Day is signaliz'd by a double Victory; and the Rebels capitulate in Preston, and are beaten off the Plains of Dunblaine at the same time; and in the latter Place especially, by a vastly inferior Number. But we were assisted by a Good Good, and Supported by a Good Cause; and with such Aid, one would Chase a Thousand, and Two would put Ten Thousand to Flight. But this leads me to a

5th. Particular, wherein God has signally appear'd for us; and that in the so speedy Suppression of the late unnatural Rebellion, and with so little loss of Blood. That the Rebels should suffer themselves to be shut up in a Town rather than Fight it out in the Field, seems to have been an Infatuation of God upon them, and is no less an Instance of his Goodness to us: For by this Means, one Part of the Kingdom was cleared of them at once, and we were delivered from the Danger that was nearest: And then after the Battle of Dunblaine, they had not Courage to venture upon another. No! not after they had the Pretender with them, on whose Head they design'd to place the

* Ps. cxxiv. 6. || Ps. lxviii. 23. † Chron. xxix. 11.

Crown. No sooner did our Valiant Generals move towards them, but they retired, and with their Mock Prince, were glad, as many of them as could, to get out of the Kingdom, and escape to his old Asylum. The rest dispers'd, were taken, or surrender'd; some have receiv'd the just Reward of their Demerits, while a much greater Number are indebted for their Lives to the great Clemency of that Gracious Prince they had so unworthily endeavour'd to destroy. And tho' too many of his Majesty's good Subjects have lost their Lives, and have been murdered by our Enemies, yet through the good Providence of God, the Loss has been comparatively but very little, and much less than could have been expected.

6. We have also cause to be thankful to God, that we may hope, the late wicked Rebellion will, now it is suppressed, turn to the Advantage of our King and Country. It has not a little contributed to distinguish the real Friends from the real Enemies of both; and by its Disappointment and Defeat, the Crown is fixed more firmly on the Royal Head that wears it; and Opportunity is given for taking such Measures as may more effectually secure our Peace and Happiness for the future.

7. And lastly, I might add, that God has done all this for a very undeserving People. *Not for our sake: has he done it *, but for his own Name sake.* Not because we had in the least deserved that he should thus appear for us, for we have exceedingly provoked him by our Iniquities, by our abounding Irreligion, Impiety, and Prophaneness, but especially by our vile Ingratitude. Many a time have we been deliver'd in the Day of our Distress, but we have been wretchedly unthankful for former Mercies, we have strangely forgot *God our Saviour, and the great things he has done for us †.* All his Goodness has not led us to Repentance, has not made us hitherto a better People, but we still remain a very wicked and murmuring Generation; even, which is

* Ezek. xxxvi. 32

† Ps. cxi. 21.

most

most amazing, repining at our Deliverances themselves, and with too prevailing a Disposition, to bring upon our selves all those Evils, from which we have been delivered by a Series of most wonderful Providences, and almost miraculous divine Appearances in our Defence. And how wonderful is it, that after all such unworthy Carriage, God has not yet forsaken us, nor given us a Prey to the Teeth of our Enemies, that we are yet in possession of that Religion which we have so little valued, and have so much dishonoured by a loose and unbecoming Conversation; and of those precious Rights and Liberties, which such a number among us have been so willing to give up. *It is of the Lord's Mercies that we are not consumed, and because his Compassions fail not **.

III. I will now endeavour in the last place, to bring home all that has been said in an Exhortation to a most devout and thankful Acknowledgment of the great Goodness and Mercy of Almighty God, in the happy Occasion of this Day.

And have we not the greatest Cause of Thankfulness, when we have been deliver'd from so great Evil and Mischief, as was intended by the late unnatural Rebellion? When the good Providence of God has so remarkably appeared for the Protection and Assistance of our King and Country? If the vile Attempt had succeeded, we must have changed a Protestant King for a Popish Impostor, our Bibles for Romantick Legends, and an idolatrous Mass-book; a Gospel Ministry, for a Swarm of lazy Fryars; our Faith for Absurdity; our purer Worship, for blind Superstition, and the vilest Idolatry; and we must have given up the Liberty of our Consciences, to those who say to our Souls, *Bow down, that we may pass over you ||*; or we must have suffered the most exquisite Tortures, all the barbarous and cruel Usage, which a blind and furious Zeal, the most savage Inhumanity and insatiable Revenge could have treated us with. We must have seen

* Lam. iii. 22.

|| Isa. li. 23.

our Country involved and buried in Ruin and Desolation, and filled with the miserable Slaughter of its once Happy Inhabitants; our Families beggar'd and undone, and the Chains of Slavery worse than Death, fastened upon us, without any humane Prospect of being ever deliver'd again from so cruel a Bondage.

And what Compassion can we think those wicked Men can deserve, who would have brought all this upon us? Who would have sold us into the Hands of our bitterest Enemies, who would have made us of a free People, a Province of *France*, and have deliver'd us up into their Power, whose tender Mercies are Cruelty.

How often has the same Merciful Providence of God saved us from the like Danger? When those Miseries were just coming upon us, in a late Reign, when a Prince of the Popish Religion was upon the Throne, who was equally a Bigot to his Sect, with his pretended Son, and had prepar'd the same for us, and we were brought into sore Distress, God heard our Crys, and sent us a Deliverer, the late King *William* of Blessed Memory, and by a wonderful Revolution wrought out Salvation for us. And when we were again brought to the very Brink of Destruction, in how wonderful a manner did God make way for our present most Gracious Sovereign's Accession to the Throne? What our Circumstances then were, and in how seasonable a Juncture that Mercy came, I cannot better Express than in the Words of the Ambassadors extraordinary of our Good Friends the States-General, in their Congratulatory Speech to his Majesty on that Happy Occasion; 'At a Time when the Protestant Religion was threaten'd with total Ruin, when these Kingdoms were in Danger of being invaded, and when our Republick had Reason to dread the greatest Calamities: At a time when Arbitrary Power and Popery thought to bring all *Europe* under their Yoke, when Superstition and Persecution, their inseparable Companions, armed with Fire and Sword, seemed ready to destroy all: In that time of Fear and

and Anguish, God by a wonderful Effect of his Omnipotence, put the Scepter into your Majesty's Hands, to quiet our Minds, to defend his Church, to support his People, and to preserve their Laws and Liberties. And now again, how great is our present Deliverance? Happy art thou, O Britain, who is like unto thee, O People saved by the Lord, the Shield of thy Help, and who is the Sword of thy Excellency! And thine Enemies are found Liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high Places.* Let us praise the Lord for ever, because He has done it, and wait on his Name, for it is good before his Saints||. Let them shout for Joy that favour our Righteous Cause, yea let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, that had Pleasure in the Prosperity of his Servants **.

And as all true Protestants have abundant reason to be thankful to God, to adore and bless his Name, for the great Mercy of this Day, so have Protestant Dissenters in a particular Manner. We should have fallen the first Sacrifice to the Malice of the Enemies, had their execrable Designs taken Effect. And God has signally appeared in our Vindication, and cleared up our Innocency from those unjust Aspersions which have been cast upon us. We have been represented as Enemies to all Monarchy, People of Republican Principles, and dispos'd to rebel on every Occasion; and yet there has not been found one English Dissenter in the late Rebellion, but they have all been, to a Man, most Zealous against it, and unmoveable in their Allegiance to their Rightful Sovereign. And the whole World is Witness, with how steady and unshaken Loyalty, the Presbyterians in Scotland have behav'd on this important Occasion; and how much they have suffer'd, where the Rebels had Power, for their Fidelity to his present Majesty, and their Attachment to the Interest of their Country; while the Men that have always laid Claim to Loyalty, as their own Peculiar, who have loaded us with all the Scandal and Calumny they have been able

* Deut. xxxiii. 29. || Ps. lli. 9. ** Ps. xxxv. 27.

to keep together ; who have been constantly teasing and worrying us with the Murder of one King, which we had no hand at all in, and which our Fathers at that time protested against, which we condemn as much as themselves, have much more merited the reproachful Name of King-killers, for having entered into, or been Abettors of a more villainous Design to Depose and Murder the best of Kings.

The Enemies of the Government know very well our Affection for his Majesty, and the Regard we have at all times had for our Country, how ready we have always been to support the Constitution when it was most in Danger from Popery and Arbitrary Power ; and that it was impossible to engage us in their intended Mischief ; and therefore they raised the popular Cry against us ; not that they did in the least believe the Establish'd Church was in any Danger from us, they knew otherwise ; but to bring an Odium upon us, to expose us to the Rage and Fury of the Mob, and render us less capable of exerting ourselves for the Defence of our King and Country.

Thus in the Reign of the late Queen, because we could not be prevailed upon to come into those Measures that were destructive to our Religion and Liberties, a severe Law was made against us, by which we were deprived of the Natural Right of educating our Children ; *Several of the chief Promoters of which, have since openly appeared in the Cause of the Pretender.* And they began their Rebellion with Insults upon us, with plundering our Houses, and burning our Places of Worship in divers Parts of the Land, for no other Reason so much, as our inviolable Fidelity and Affection to King George, and our present happy Settlement, and our utter Abhorrence of their wretched Cause and mischievous Designs.

The only thing that we have to regret in this Case, is, that we were under any Incapacities which hinder'd us from shewing to the World, what we are ready to do as well as suffer, in the Cause of Liberty, and for the best of Princes. However, we have not ceased to offer

offer up our united Prayers to God on that account, in which, we would humbly hope, we have not been altogether useless.

Let us all therefore join with one Heart and Mind in our Praises to God for his great Mercies. And that we may do it in such a manner as may secure our Acceptance in it, and the Continuance of the Divine Favour and Presence with us ; let us retain a deep Sense of our great Deliverance ; and this we should discover in the following Particulars.

1. By a deep Humiliation for, and a sincere Reformation of those things which have been so provoking to God. All the Goodness of God is designed to lead us to Repentance * ; and if it have not this Effect upon us, if we continue unreformed, we may expect his severest Vengeance, if after all the great things that our God has done for us, we still continue to break his Commandments, and remain a wicked and unthankful People, we may justly fear, lest his Anger flame out against us till we are utterly consumed †. Nothing will so highly aggravate our Guilt, as this ; it will not only prevent what further Good the Blessed God had thought to do unto us, but exceedingly hasten our Ruin.

2. Let it rivet us faster in our Affection and Fidelity to his Majesty King George, and raise our Esteem for our Religion and Liberties. They must be very valuable Blessings which God has secured to us by such remarkable Appearances. Let us not hearken to the false and foolish Suggestions of evil Men, nor in the least regard their impertinent Noise and malicious Nonsense. Let us shew our Esteem for the Gospel, by a sincere Obedience to its Precepts, by a well-regulated Zeal for its Purity and Simplicity, and by a true Christian Charity to all, by which we shall best discover that we are indeed the Followers of the Blessed Jesus, and our Affection to our King and Country, by a hearty Disposition to venture our All in the Interest of Both.

* Rom. ii 4.

† Ezra ix. 13, 19.

3. Let us be very earnest with God for the Accomplishment of what remains yet to be done for the perfecting of our Happiness. What he has already done for us, is an Encouragement to hope for what is yet wanting; and the Lord who hath heard our Supplication, will receive our Prayers*, if our Sins are not an Obstacle to it. The ill Spirit that yet so much prevails among us, has indeed a bad Aspect, and may justly cause sad Thoughts of Heart within us; but then we should be more importunate with God, that he would heal and remove it, and pour out a better Spirit in its room. In a word, *'Let us give God no rest till he establish, and till he shall make our Jerusalem a Praise in the whole Earth||.* Let us earnestly beseech him, that his Church may every where be in a more flourishing Condition, and especially among us; That he would heal our Divisions, repair our Breaches, extinguish our unhappy Feuds and Animosities, and remove all the Obstacles to our Peace and further Reformation; That he would pour down all Blessings on our most Gracious Sovereign King George, on our Excellent Prince and Princess, and their lovely Issue; That all his Majesty's Enemies may be cloathed with Shame, and the Crown may long flourish upon his Sacred Head **; That both the present Age may enjoy the Happiness of his Government, and Generations to come may call him Blessed.

* Ps. vi. 9.

|| Ps. lxii. 7.

** Ps. cxxxii. 18.